

Social Images of Sexual Exploitation and Human Suffering In Mulk Raj Anand *Coolie* and *Untouchable*

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Abstract

Social images related with society. In our society, there are so many social problems. Both the novel brings out the suffering of the poor human being. Bakha, the protagonist in *Untouchable* represents the exploitation which has been the destiny of untouchables like him. The untouchable belongs to the scavenger caste. Thus, untouchable deals with different kinds of exploitations such as social, political, economic and sexual exploitation. Mulk Raj Anand's *Coolie* is a novel of child labor. Munoo is the central character or protagonist of the novel, *Coolie*. The novelist depicts the turn child labor in the life of Munoo through his story of repression. The novel *Coolie* is a painful story of human suffering. It discusses the problems of coolies in our society. Mulk Raj Anand was one of the first India-based writers in English literature. He was an Indian writer in English. He is appreciated for his novels and short stories. Life of this great writer is filled with immense happenings. Certainly some of them are very critical and some are unbelievable. He focuses various social, economic and cultural issues in his works particularly in his novels. He has written about 15 novels; some of them his famous novels are *Untouchable* (1935), *Coolie* (1936), *Two Leaves and a Bud* (1937), *The Village* (1939), *Across the Black Waters* (1939), *The Sword and the Sickle* (1942), *The Private Life of an Indian Prince* (1953). He has written also two collections namely *Indian Fairy Tales* (1946) and *More Indian Fairy Tales* (1961). In addition to this, he has created more than 6 collections of short stories. Anand's first three novels – *Untouchable*, *Coolie* and *Two Leaves and a Bud* deal with the social issues in Pre-independent India.

Anand focuses the lot of class of the deprived, the oppressed and the exiles. Coolie and Untouchable are the best example of the deprived and oppressed society.

Keywords: Untouchability, Suffering, Exile, Exploitation, Colonialism, Industrialism

Introduction

Life is very precious for everyone. Life needs proper care for survival. But some social images of suffering affect the happiness of the society. There are many kind of social suffering in our society. The paper entitled social images of sexual exploitation and human suffering in Mulk Raj Anand Coolie and Untouchable. Mulk Raj Anand's stories depicted a realistic and sympathetic portrait of the poor in India. He is known as India's Charles Dickens. Anand highlights the class conflict between upper caste people and lower caste people in his novels. Mulk raj Anand's 'Coolie' gives a chilling picture of a down trodden boy munno who at his early stage gets into oblivion of his own existence. Anand continued his exploration of the Indian society in the form of class and caste conflict. This paper presents the Class conflict between the downtrodden and high class Hindus that was beautifully portrayed by Mulk Raj Anand in his novel Coolie. Anand is a novelist of urgent social concerns and preoccupations, and the social impulse is at the heart of his writings. He is considered the Messiah of the downtrodden, the unwanted and the unloved. Even in a random reading of Anand's novels, the reader becomes immediately aware of such issues as the tyranny of the caste system, its injustice, and its social, moral and economic consequences, class conflicts, exploitation of various kinds of the poor by the rich, quest for identity, search for freedom, etc. Under colonial rule, a number of social and economic changes took place and as a result a feudal society was gradually transformed into a capitalistic one. Untouchable and Coolie are legendary stories of two teenagers Bakha and Munoo, appear among the people of the modern society to tell their problems, abuses and exploitations they endured. Bakha and Munoo are the symbolic representatives of the whole teenage class of the present day who give a voice to the predicament of the mute humanity in odd circumstances. There is a parallel central theme in Untouchable and Coolie – social exploitation, exploitation of the poor and the under-privileged class by the forces of capitalism, industrialism and colonialism. In Anand's Coolie, Munoo is denied his fundamental rights to life and happiness and is exploited and made to suffer, till he dies of consumption. The Novelist makes it quite clear that Munoo is not the only victim of such exploitation. He represents millions of those for whom such exploitation is the lot of everyday life. Both these Novels have been written with a unique purpose. These Novels are powerful condemnation of modern capitalistic Indian society and feudal system with the shameless and tragic exploitation of the underdog and poor class who face the difficulties without protest. Both the protagonists desire to live but the society does not allow them to

live. They die of exploitation, poverty and hunger. Thus, only a single problem that has attracted the attention of most of the writers, philosophers and administrators is the only exploitation of children which can be possible to eradicate of this planet only through application of more possible improvements that can be beneficial for the teenagers. One of the helpful components is education which can help in relieving this major evil in the society. The novel, *Untouchable* is Mulk Raj Anand's first novel and it provided to him vast recognition and stature. The novel is a sociological manuscript that focus concentration on a number of traditions, social troubles etc. of Hindu society during 1930's. This novel depicts the pragmatic and realistic image of society. This is fundamentally an epic of unhappiness of the human being trapped in the net of the long-standing caste system. But at the same time, the novel has a tragic attractiveness of its own. For Anand dirt and mud is as much a part of life as attractiveness, hygiene and graciousness. It means not that he loves viciousness but pragmatism demands it, if it is that in real life. In this novel, the novelist has described an image of a sweeper boy, who is untouchable. The protagonist of the novel is the representative of all oppressed society in pre independence of India. The protagonist, Bakha is the figure of agony just because of his caste. There are other characters who also suffer because of their lower caste. They live in a huddled colony in their mud-walled cottages. The theme of the novel - untouchability itself is very practical. *Untouchable* is a practical novel of socially and generally crushed protagonist Bakha. It is a slice from a life without any transform or alteration. The novel starts with a realistic image of the outcastes' colony. Bakha represents the exploitation and subjugation which has been the destiny of untouchables like him. The untouchable belongs to the scavenger caste, commonly identified as 'bhangi' in various Indian languages. The work of this caste was to clean latrines and streets for the upper castes. The living circumstances of the untouchables were tremendously squalid and they were enforced to live in mud-walled and single-roomed cottages. There was foul smell all over the place and there was not appropriate system of drainage. Almost each page of the novel is saturated in Bakha's invisible tears who patiently tolerate the most embarrassing and disheartening days of his young life in this story. From morning to evening he is forced to deal with detestation, discrimination and insincerity. There is no question that Mulk Raj Anand has created with *Untouchable*, a novel that articulates the maltreatments of an exploited class. He is certainly the 'Burning Voice' of those people who form the untouchable caste, and fulfils the objective of the novelist to change words into forecast. The novel describes a day in the life of Bakha, a Sweeper-boy, and brings out the effect on him of the several events which take place, by providing us his 'flow of awareness', in the manner of Virginia Woolf and James Joyce. Bakha, the protagonist is 18 years old son of Lakha, who is Jamadar and gets a pair of breeches from an English soldier. But as the day starts, his work of toilet cleaning also starts. He is honest and competent in his work. Bakha's sister Sohini goes to village-well to bring water; Kalinath, the village pastor of the temple out of the special

favor draws water to fill Sohini bucket, and feels attracted to her beauty, and driving away the others recommends her to go to his home later in the day to clean the courtyard. And, when Sohini goes to his residence, he makes indecent suggestions to her. She begins screaming. This duality and double standards is vibrantly depicted by Mulk Raj Anand in the novel. Thus, untouchable deals with dissimilar kinds of exploitations such as social, political, economic and sexual exploitation, as exploitation and suffering are its major theme but social exploitation is at the origin of all other exploitations. It refers to the class discrimination on the birth basis, which gives some castes unnecessary benefit over other castes. It is an internal disagreement of a human being who is caught in the trap of a traditional caste system. Mulk Raj Anand's *Coolie* is epical in sweep up and views in purview, images of the effects that the enveloping evil of class-system has a poor hill-boy, Munoo. Munoo and his fellow coolie are exploited by the force of capitalism, industrialization, colonialism and communalism. Mulk Raj Anand makes it very clear, that such exploitation and rejection of life and gladness is the lot of the poor all over the place in India, whether in village like Billaspur or small town like Sham Nagar or big cities like Bombay and Daulatpur. The novel, *Coolie* exposes the monster of private enterprise or capitalism, the haughty English colonialists and cross-section of Indian society from the lowest section to the rich businessmen. Munoo is the central character or protagonist of the novel *Coolie*. Generally the protagonists of the novels of Mulk Raj Anand are from dust and dirt; they are too humble to report against the malevolence powers which lean to repress them and their like. The meticulousness, cleverness and sensitiveness of these characters are terribly suppressed that they can never increase self-confidence to wage a fight for their reason. However, they feel the torture of the unjust practices sensitively, but the response is inadequate just to their acknowledgement of the social position which they are destined to admit without a wish for liberation. The awareness of their defencelessness against the establishment, social set-up, taboos, customs and traditions makes them writhe with sensitive psychological pain. They can do not anything but admit their conviction. The summary lines of *Coolie* describe a bohemian life story of a young hill boy Munoo. A peaceful life in the Kangra hill with friends and relations seemed to be short lived as Munoo's uncle Dayaram, at the instigation of his incensed wife, drags the orphan to town to spin out his living. The novel is amazing for the largeness of its work of art, the variety of its characters, and the multiplicity of its episodes. *Coolie* is the pathetic odyssey of Munoo, who sets out in a search of employment and livelihood. His various roles including those of a home servant, a factory-worker, a coolie and a rickshaw-puller take him to several places from Bombay to Simla, until speedy tuberculosis brings his struggle to a premature demise. The orphan boy Munoo runs to avoid every place of unkindness in quest of contentment and everywhere he is suppressed. He is fifteen years old and he does many jobs at Bombay, Daulatpur and Simla. His disease has become incurable because of poverty. In the end he dies because of tuberculosis. Munoo is exploited very much by one person or another and in one

way or another. Munoo commonly represents the misery and agony of the exploited persons. Repression or suppression plays key role in Coolie to demonstrate that how pitiable the lives of the Indian people are under the exploitive forces. The novelist depicts the turn down and upturns in the life of Munoo through his story of repression. Uncle and aunt of Munoo consider him as a machine for getting money. Munoo agrees to go to town with his uncle and willingly accepts his role as a slave. At the age of fourteen years, Munoo is pressurised to work in the house of Babu Nathoo Ram who is a worker in Imperial Bank of Sham Nagar. The romantic views of Munoo are ruined by Babu Nathoo Ram's wife. This lady always abuses and curses Munoo without any reason because she is not good-natured. Munoo is deprived of happiness. He is disgraced for relieving outside the wall and abuse is showered on him. Munoo bears physical and psychological torture and this represents repression in the form of child labour. Even he is not provided with the basic requirements at the affectionate age of fourteen years. Therefore, Munoo reached on the conclusion that there are only two types of people lives on the earth, the poor and the rich. In the novel, coolie is Anand's humanistic belief that class-awareness born of money or social position can have humiliating impacts on those that are at the lower rungs. We can see in Coolie how the harms of poverty and unkindness compress a bud of youth before it could blossom to any level. Mr. and Mrs. Nathoo Ram, Jimmy Thomas (Chimta Sahib), Daya Ram, Ganpat and Mrs. Mainwaring also, have only disrespect for Munoo. They kick him, slap him and abuse him. More or less at each stage he comes crossway merely tenderness and unkindness which make his life a painful story of agony. He is forced to become a sort of an aimless vagabond with apparently no control on his fate. Munoo's troubles and travails are sharp pointers to man's cruel enjoyment in torturing child domestics. Munoo represents those countless children whose childhood is lost in continuous physical labour. Affection, concern and support are odd words for them. Mulk Raj Anand explores the subject of human pain repeatedly. The novel Coolie is a painful story of human suffering. It discusses the problems of coolies in a class ridden society. In Bombay hunger and poverty are to be witness on an even bigger dimension. At cotton mills of Sir George White – the instinctive working circumstances the depraved creditors the dictatorial foreman treat the Indian laborers like animals. The novel, Coolie takes us a guided tour of India where we come into contact with the people who have abundance of hunger but no food to eat as well as people who have abundance of food who have no hunger. On the other hand, the rich who are impatient and restless on their luxury beds as well as the wretched ones who take pleasure in peaceful sleep on the bed of stone slap, causing distress to innocents like Munoo. The novelist has best given his motto of all man to transform in human prototype of society.

Conclusion

Thus it can be concluded that this research paper gives us a realistic image of the exploitation and suffering of the deprived. This paper depicts that the sufferings and

exploitation of Munoo and Bakha are the suffering and exploitation of millions of Munoo and Bakhas in India. They are the universal figure, larger than life character, and is shows the starving and suffering millions of the country. This paper also recommends some solution to root out exploitation of deprived. It explores that everybody should conscious and aware and depicts seriousness concerning the burning question of the entire Indian society. This paper deals with the subject of exploitation of teenagers with special reference to Mulk Raj Anand's two selected novels *Untouchable* and *Coolie*. The term exploitation is not a new coined problem in the modern era but was founded in Russia by Karl Marl and later was comprehended by the whole universe. Exploitation of teenagers is one of those evils which become obstacles in the complete evolution of the nation. By keeping in mind the present scenario of the Indian society, this paper scrutinizes some causes and remedies for relieving this particular phenomenon keeping in mind the novels *Untouchable* and *Coolie*. In the novels, two protagonists Bakha and Munoo represent not only themselves but of the whole teenage class of the Indian modern era who fall victims of exploitations because of monetary need. Dr. Mulk Raj Anand's two Novels *Untouchable* and *Coolie* have been considered as the graphical representation of the untouchability and deprivation of the lower classes of India. However with the deep insights one can observe that the phenomenon of exploitation of teenagers has been fully flourished by the author's skillful hands. Mulk Raj Anand was a man of realism. The characters of his Novels are more real and universal rather than subjective i.e. individual. Most of his writings are directly or indirectly investigating deeply the social process. *Untouchable* and *Coolie* are not only literary pieces became well known talk about the behavioral pattern of untouchability and the people deprived of social, cultural, religious rights but also because of several exploitations of people including innocent children of that period.

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